CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Turkish-Bulgarian pact of non- aggression. The announcement of signing of- came as a surprise to Budapest and commented on widely in the press of February 18 to 20.

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For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Des. #2466
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated March 1,1941 From / To Hungary (Travers)

File No. 864.00 P. R./201

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

The announcement of the signing of the Bulgarian-Turkish pact of non-aggression came as a surprise to Budapest and was commented upon widely in the press of February 18 to 20. The consensus was that the

pact

pact might be considered as an element of consolidation in Southeast Europe, and above all as a success of Axis and Soviet foreign policy. Divergent ideas were expressed regarding the question of the possibility of Turkey's having assumed a passive attitude in the event that there be a change in the status quo in the Balkans. MAGYARORSZAG saw a powerful military unit withdrawn from a possible front, and it considered the pact to contribute to the stabilization of peace in the Balkans - which had caused general relief in that region. Moscow, it said, had made the agreement possible by a consistent denial of the existence of a secret Russo-Turkish anti-German agreement which strengthened the peaceful intentions of Turkey, provided she had some guarantee from Bulgaria who, on her side, again had raised the question of territorial revision and had indicated that she would not resist Germany in a military sense.

MAGYAR NEMZET took it for granted that the Governments of Bulgaria and Turkey previously had discussed the signing of the pact with their friends - Bulgaria with Germany; Turkey with Russia. The latter had indicated clearly her desire for peace and had influenced Turkey to restrict her foreign policy to a protection of her own frontiers.

Future developments, continued MAGYARORSZAG, were dependent upon England whose support or abandonment of Greece would determine the continuation or the end of war in the Balkans.

Opinions

Opinions differed as to an interpretation of the meaning of the pact, especially with regard to Greece, and this phase of the matter was punctuated by the press generally with question marks or exclamation points. The Arrow Cross PESTI UJSAG asserted that Greece had been overwhelmed by the pact which, in any case, was found to have been unfavorable to Great Britain.

On February 25 the press began to doubt that the significance of this pact had brought peace to the Balkans. Bulgaria herself was said to have called more men to the colors, to have arrested politicians of extreme views, and otherwise to have made preparations of an emergency nature, and the feeling began to be held that some activity in the Balkans would begin in the near future.

The Bulgarian Minister expressed to me great satisfaction with the signing of the pact. He said that his country now had a sense of safety to the south and it was especially gratifying that Bulgarian troops could be recalled from the Turkish border where their concentration was expensive and their morale was harmed by the restlessness of inactivity. He said that Bulgaria had no intention of becoming a battlefield for England, as Churchill had suggested, but desired to maintain peace and her independence. A treaty of friendship, he continued, was in effect with Yugoslavia; relations with Hungary

became

became better daily; and Bulgaria had decided to defer her aspirations for territorial revision until the end of the war. In consequence, he felt that his country's position in Southeast Europe now was regularized as far as it was possible to do so. He denied the report of the presence of German troops in his country (though visitors arriving in Budapest after visiting both Bucharest and Sofia maintain that German troops are in Bulgaria and that German staff officers who had been seen in uniform in Bucharest, now are to be seen wearing civilian clothes in Sofia).

The Chief of the Press Section of theForeign Office told me on February 27 that Germany, through von Papen, had instigated the Bulgar-Turkish accord. Turkey, he said, probably had been given assurances that she would not be attacked by Germany; Bulgaria was under the complete control of the Reich. German troops might be expected soon to move into Bulgaria where large forces would be concentrated as a threatening inducment to Greece to come to terms with Italy, but Germany was not herself inclined to enter into hostilities in the Balkans.

Indicative of Bulgaria's attitude towards the entering of German troops into her territory, Mr. Ullein-Reviczky said that road-signs in German had been erected to mark the way to Sofia.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF CURRENT INFORMATION
FEB 23 1942
Department of State

PD

PLAIN

FROM
Ankara

Dated February 21, 1942

Rec'd 10:46 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 24 1942
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
FEB 24 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FEB 23 1942
Department of State

Secretary of State,

Washington.

94, Twenty-first.

According to OFI and Stefani dispatches all editorials in Sofia press of February 17 were devoted under large headlines to importance of Turco-Bulgarian friendship declaration signed one year previously. Points quoted from Zora and Utro were that Turco-Bulgarian relations are based on reciprocal confidence that all efforts to distrub these relations have been unavailing for which credit should be given to press of both countries and that friendship and peace are the two conditions guaranteeing Bulgaria and Turkey their liberty and independence. An OFI dispatch also reported political circles in Sofia as commenting favorably on Ankara Government and praising Monsieur Saracoglu's diplomatic skill.

FILED
FEB 25 1942

No editorial comment on this anniversary appeared in the Turkish press, however, until yesterday although

Ankara

Ankara RADIO JOURNAL on night of eighteenth mentioned favorable way in which Sofia press had commented on it; described declaration as gain for Balkans and whole world and praised press of two countries for contributing to friendly relations existing between them. Yesterday however semi-official ULUS and several Istanbul newspapers commented on anniversary in friendly terms, former stating that basis of foreign policy of both countries is to avoid all aggression; that so far only these two Balkan countries who agree in demanding nothing of each other and in finding no value in blood and fire have been spared from war; and that they are two neighbors who mind their own business and desiring only to live in peace. Istanbul press emphasized sincerity of friendship of two countries and stated that there was no reason why these mutual good neighbor relations should not continue in future. TASVIRI EFKAR gave these good relations as an example to world observing that recent Pan American Conference would have acted more wisely had it attempted to bring about agreement between belligerents instead of discussing methods of severing relations with Axis.

KELLEY

GW

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